

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-11, 14-18 and 21-27 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10 are amended and claims 12, 13, 19 and 20 are canceled. The features of claims 13 and 20 have been placed into independent claims 1 and 10, respectively. Thus, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

Claims 1, 7, 9-15, 17-22 and 24-27 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP-A-8-69684 (Chatani) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,721,001 (Berstis) and U.S. Patent No. 6,580,460 (Takahashi et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

None of the applied references discloses or suggests the combinations of features recited in independent claims 1 and 9-11. In particular, none of the applied references discloses or suggests the claimed controller that automatically starts the charging of the digital camera battery after the transmission of the digital images is stopped, as recited in independent claims 1 and 9-11. The Office Action relies upon Takahashi et al. for allegedly suggesting this feature. See, for example, page 5, line 8 - page 6, line 19 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully submit that Takahashi does not disclose or suggest automatically starting the charging of the digital camera battery after the transmission of the digital images is stopped.

As shown in Fig. 3, and as described at col. 12, line 62 - col. 13, line 49, Takahashi et al. charges the digital camera battery in two situations, neither of which "automatically starts...after the transmission of the digital images is stopped." The first situation is where the user manually turns off the camera (see step 307 and col. 13, lines 27-28) and the battery capacity is determined to be smaller than a prescribed value. Requiring the user to manually switch off the camera clearly does not disclose or suggest automatically starting charging of the battery after transmission of the digital images is stopped. The second situation is when no operation has been made to the camera for a prescribed time or more (see step 308 and

col. 13, lines 37-46), in which case the camera will be turned off if the remaining charge of the battery is larger than a prescribed value, otherwise the battery is charged (see col. 13, lines 43-49). This second situation also does not correspond to automatically starting charging of the digital camera battery after the transmission of the digital images is stopped. Rather, Takahashi only starts charging the battery if the camera has remained idle for more than a prescribed time (the counting of the prescribed time starting after the last camera operation which may not have even related to the transmission of digital images) and other conditions are satisfied (a sufficiently low remaining charge exists on the battery). Accordingly, and contrary to what is asserted in the Office Action, Takahashi et al. does not disclose or suggest the combination of features recited in Applicants' independent claims.

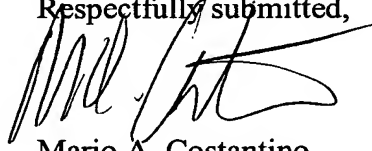
Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

Claims 2-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the references applied against claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,602,458 (Dowe). Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the references applied against claim 1, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,844,400 (Ramsier et al.). Claims 16 and 23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the references applied against claims 1 and 10, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,135,809 (Asakawa). These rejections are respectfully traversed. None of these references overcomes the deficiencies noted above with respect to Takahashi et al. Accordingly, claims 2-6, 8, 16 and 23 also are patentable. Withdrawal of the rejections is requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

Date: March 23, 2007

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